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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the Social Skills Curriculum Model is to improve the social climate level of parent participation, and academic achievement in inner city elementary schools. The approach was developed at Martin Luther King School in New Haven, Connecticut. It is a preventative mental health model which focuses on the organization of the school. The hypothesis for this study is that a redeployment of mental health services from a child changing to a school changing focus leads to an improved climate which, in turn, frees energy for more innovative curriculum practices. This evaluation was conducted to assess the impact of the project at King School and to develop evaluation methods which could be useful in future field tests. Four dimensions were assessed: (1) school climate, (2) student achievement, (3) impact on staff, and (4) impact on parents. Student achievement was significantly higher at King School than in all other New Haven Title I schools. (Author/AM)

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A Social Skills Curriculum for Inner City Children
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Yale Child Study Center

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Progress Report - 1976-77

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Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Evaluation	2
I. School Climate	3
A. Attendance	3
B. Suspensions	3
C. Behavioral Crisis	4
D. Referrals for Special Evaluation	5
E. School Governance	6
F. Classroom Climate	7
II. Impact on Staff	9
A. Staff Questionnaires	9
1. Open Ended Questions	10
2. Rating Scale	11
B. Social Skills Teaching Units	15
1. Category I	16
a. Elections	17
b. Whole Person	21
c. Banking	25
d. Gospel Choir	28
e. Kindergarten Language	29
2. Category II	31
3. Category III	32

	Page
III. Impact on Students - Metropolitan Achievement	
Tests for Reading and Math	35
IV. Impact on Parents	40
A. Level I - Broad-based Participation	40
1. Home-School Communications	40
2. Parent Meetings	42
B. Level II - Parents in Day to Day School Life	42
1. Parent Questionnaire	42
2. Parent Attendance	44
C. Level III - Parents in School Governance	44
Summary and Implications	46
Recommendations	50
Publications	
Appendixes	

This evaluation was designed by Sara Sparrow, Ph.D., Evaluator and Carol Schraft, M.S., Secondary Investigator, with consultation by Beth Ausbrook, Ph.D., University of the District of Columbia and statistical consultation by Domenic Cicchetti, Ph.D. Janette Johnson, M.S. collected the data at King School and assisted with the data reduction and analysis. Nancy Padian, M.A. assisted with data reduction and analysis. This project was made possible through our affiliation with Martin Luther King School, New Haven, Connecticut. Stephen Signore, King School principal, gave the project continual support and demonstrated ongoing commitment to its concepts.

The King teaching staff had primary responsibility for creating all of the teaching units. The Whole Person Curriculum was conducted under the leadership of Warren Weiswasser, M.D., postgraduate fellow in Child Development at Yale Child Study Center by the following teachers - Ann Benas, Lillie Perkins, Nancy (Garman) Schwartz, Allene Small, and Ruth Wilson. Marjorie Janis, M.S., Child Study Center assisted with the Whole Person Unit. The Banking Unit was developed by Ann Benas, Craig O'Connell and Ruth Wilson. The Gospel Choir was led by Lillie Perkins with assistance by Maye Edmonds, Janette Johnson, and Evelyn Rhodes. The kindergarten language program was developed by Maryann Casanova. Ann Benas, Craig O'Connell and Ruth Wilson were instrumental in the classroom observation pilot study. Amy Walker developed a tutorial program for children with severe learning problems which will be studied in 1977-78. Other staff members who participated in the development of curriculum units and other aspects of the program were Vivian Blue, Willa Conquest, Frank Hogan, Linda Lazaroff, Doris Massie, Linda Thorpe and Loretta Villa. Viola Clarke was helpful with the cafeteria and parent participation programs. Alice Griffin aided in organizing the flow of project communications.

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A Social Skills Curriculum for Inner City Children #MH27561-02

Evaluation Report - 1976-1977

Introduction

The purpose of the Social Skills Curriculum Model is to improve the social climate, level of parent participation, and academic achievement in inner city elementary schools. The approach was developed at Martin Luther King School in New Haven, Connecticut, and will be fieldtested in a comparable site from 1977-1980. This is a preventative mental health model which focuses on the organization of the school as compared to a primary emphasis on clinical intervention. The hypothesis is that a redeployment of mental health services from a child changing to school changing emphasis, a participatory governance mechanism, and the integration of parents into all aspects of school life will lead to an improved school climate or a level of reasonable stability. In such a healthy environment, energies are freed for changing and improving the curriculum.

The resources of this project have been utilized at King School to design and implement a comprehensive parent participation program, to provide supports for teachers to create teaching strategies for social and academic skill development, to support a comprehensive school governance body, and to provide help for children with social and learning problems within the regular classroom. The implementation of this model at King School was assessed through staff and parent attitudes; records of attendance, achievement, and student referrals for special services; minutes of meetings; and evaluations of teacher developed curriculum units. All aspects of the program were evaluated, including the effect of the program on academic achievement as measured by standardized tests. A handbook describing the model and the process of implementation has been completed in draft form.

Evaluation

This evaluation was conducted to assess the impact of the project at King School and to develop evaluation methods which will be useful in the field test. Four dimensions were assessed at King School: 1. School Climate; 2. Student Achievement; 3. Impact on Staff and 4. Impact on Parents. School climate was measured by student and staff attendance, suspensions, incidents of behavioral crisis, referrals for special evaluation, and the process of school governance. A procedure to analyze classroom climate from process recordings was developed for the field test, and piloted in three King classrooms. Student achievement was measured by Metropolitan Achievement Test scores. Impact of the program on staff was assessed by attitudinal questionnaires and evaluations of classroom social skills projects. Parent participation was assessed at each of three levels: 1). parent participation in general school functions and meetings, 2. parent involvement in the day to day life of the school as paid assistants, and 3. parent participation in school governance. Records of meetings, home-school communications, and parent questionnaires were utilized.

Since there was no control school, we were unable to compare much of our data with another setting. We have, however, utilized attendance and achievement test data from the New Haven Public Schools and have made comparisons between King and all other Title I schools. Developing adequate measures is a major difficulty in evaluating a program designed largely to affect school climate. Much of the data is of necessity descriptive, although statistical analysis has been employed where appropriate.

I. School Climate

The school climate, or atmosphere for learning, is measured by staff and student attendance, student suspensions, incidents of behavioral crisis, reasons children are referred for special evaluation, and school governance. The impact of the program on staff attitudes and the relationship of parents to the school are also indicators of school climate, and are described separately in sections III and IV of this report. It is expected that an improved school climate, will be reflected in improved academic achievement. Academic achievement is described in Section II. A system to analyze classroom climate from process transcriptions was developed and piloted this year.

A. Attendance: One measure of school climate is attendance. If the school is a pleasant place to be, both staff and students will be more regular in their attendance. King School has the second highest staff and student attendance of any school in New Haven. According to Board of Education records for King School, the rate of student absences was 5.5%, and the rate of staff absences was 3.7% for the 1976-77 school year. The average rate of student absences for all other elementary schools was 9.0%, and staff absences was 6.4%. The rate of absences for demographically comparable schools in New Haven (90% or more low income black student population) was 9.7% for students and 6.0% for staff.

B. Suspensions: When the overall climate of a school is positive, the need to suspend children is decreased. At no time during this project have there been any suspensions, either formal or informal.

C. Behavioral Crisis: It is assumed that in a school with a positive climate, the number of disciplinary referrals will be relatively small. As part of the evaluation of another study (Discovery Room, 1976-78), data was collected on the number of children seen by one of four people in the front office (principal, secretary, community relations worker, nurse). Daily records were kept by each person for two weeks in February-March and two weeks in May-June. During the second two week tally, records were only maintained by three of the four people. Tally sheets included the student's name, and reason for coming to the front office. During the first period, 44 children came to the office for positive reasons such as getting help (i.e., breakfast, pencil), to deliver notes or gifts, or show a good work paper. During the second period, there were 27 positive instances. (The discrepancy is accounted for by the fact that the community relations worker who saw 20 children in the first session did not keep records the second session.) 67 children the first session and 60 children the second session were seen for a broad spectrum of health reasons unrelated to management or behavioral problems (i.e., band-aids, fever). Both the "positive" and "health" categories drew a wide range of students from all classrooms. In the first session, children were seen for disciplinary reasons such as fighting, disagreements and not completing classwork, 20 times. The 20 instances, however, represented a total of seven children from two classrooms. In the second session, there were 13 disciplinary referrals representing 8 students from three classrooms. The number of classrooms where the teacher needed outside assistance for discipline was very small, and one of these was a class that had been through many disruptions

and was taken over midyear by a new teacher. None of the disciplinary referrals was thought to be a crisis by the recording person. If this data is representative, only 15% of the instances when children who come to the front office for any reason represent disciplinary problems. Even this small percentage in reality represents a very few children (less than 3% of the school population), and many of these were from one class that had been through major and difficult changes.

D. Referrals for Special Evaluation: Twenty-two children (about 7% of the school population) were referred to the consulting school psychologist, a doctoral fellow from Child Study Center during the 1976-77 year. Of these, fourteen children were referred because of learning problems or questions about general intelligence. Ten of these children received some degree of psychological testing, and a learning disabilities consultant was brought in to consult about two children with particularly difficult learning problems. The psychologist had ongoing consultation with the teachers of eight more children about overall school performance, and ways that the school could be helpful. Of these, two were follow-ups on children no longer in the school, two were about behavior, one was about a truant, and three were about general performance. There was only one referral with the primary reason being disruptive behavior in the classroom, and in this instance, the problem was resolved by giving help in the regular class. There was no child in the group referred that could not be accommodated within the regular classroom with additional help. Many teachers strongly voiced the need for a school based learning disabilities teacher in order to more adequately develop academic programs for children

having difficulties, but no teacher felt that any child referred for evaluation needed outside placement because of behavioral problems. While comparable referral records from other schools is not available, it is clear that the primary concern of the teachers at King is children's problems with school learning, as opposed to troublesome behavior.

E. School Governance: In a school with a positive climate, staff and parents demonstrate an active investment in how decisions about the school are made. For this reason, a major thrust of the program is the establishment and effective functioning of a school governance mechanism. Minutes were recorded at all meetings of the School Advisory Committee, King School's governing body, during the 1976-77 year. Meetings were scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month. While this date was frequently changed, meetings were held once a month by the principal with between four and ten staff members. (Open attendance accounted for variation and shift in staff attendance.) Parents attended every meeting, although the numbers of parents varied between one and six. Parents were much less active than staff on decisions concerning internal school affairs, although they developed successful strategies for dealing with issues involving King School's relationship with the larger school system. (See Section IV, Impact on Parents.) The School Advisory Committee discussed seven major issues during the course of the year. Of these, four were brought to successful closure (building a new playground, hiring of a new teacher, planning for a major citywide parade float which won first prize, and planning two fundraising events - a bookfair and sale of King Engagement Calendars). On two more issues internal to the school - the cafeteria and building maintenance - there was ongoing discussion, short spurts of

improvement, but on the whole no clear follow through on developing a plan for resolution. The final issue, school vandalism, could not be resolved internally, but rather was dependent on help from the school system. This effort, undertaken largely by parents with staff help, was still underway at the end of the school year. Neither staff nor parents were specifically asked to evaluate to the effectiveness of the School Advisory Committee, the school's policy and decision making body. This will be included in the 1977-78 evaluation.

F. Classroom Climate: In preparation for the field test, a system to measure classroom climate through analysis of process notes of verbal interaction was developed and piloted in three first grade classrooms. Analysis of process notes was chosen over a timed interval rating system so that teachers could be included in the process of analyzing their own classrooms. The purpose of the system was to measure classroom climate regardless of the teacher's particular style or method. Each line of the transcript was coded. Particular attention was paid to the following: 1) the amount of time teachers and students each spoke, 2) the kinds of things each said (i.e., gave directives, asked questions, responded to questions, or gave personal reactions), 3) feeling tone as reflected in percentages of the discourse that were positive (praise, joke, positive correction, support of feelings, support of ideas, negative feelings expressed appropriately, protecting another, independent act), neutral, or negative (belittling, correcting in a negative way, negating feelings, negating ideas, exposing a student), 4) classroom management including the handling of misbehavior, interruptions, and digressions. Process notes were collected for three

consecutive days for each classroom to include various types of classroom activity such as early morning planning time, reading groups, class discussion, and transitions. There was no difference in climate along the dimensions measured, among the various activities or across the three days. Analysis of the transcripts confirmed the impression that while the style of the classrooms studied was different, the climate of each was consistently stable and positive. (See Appendix 1 for the coding system and results of the pilot study.)

Modification in the coding system is planned, and it will then be tested for observer reliability.

II. Impact on Staff

The impact of the program on staff was measured by means of: A. An attitude survey and B. Assessment of social skills curriculum teaching units. Teachers completed two questionnaires about the project. One was an openended questionnaire asking teachers to list the advantages, disadvantages, and things they would like to change about the program. The other questionnaire was a rating scale which was a modified version of the instrument developed by Education Research Associates for the 1976 evaluation. It is recognized that teachers helped to create this program, are invested in it, and that it provides many concrete benefits for their classroom. A positive bias on the attitude surveys is therefore expected. Assessments of teaching units developed by teachers was utilized as a second and less biased way to determine the impact of the program on teachers. The teaching units fell into three broad categories. The first category included projects with specific goals, well defined strategies, and clear evaluation methods. The second category included requests for classroom enrichment materials that were not part of a clearly defined program. The third category included projects not completed as planned.

A. Staff Questionnaires

Teacher attitude about the project was determined by two types of questionnaires. The two formats were multiple choice and open ended questions. In the previous evaluation (May, 1976), rating scales were the only technique employed. It was felt that the wording in a rating scale tended to lead teachers in a positive direction. The open ended questions used allowed teachers to articulate their own thinking about the project. Since there was no prior

discussion of the instruments, it was expected that any consensus would be a more reliable indicator of how the project was viewed. The rating scale was utilized as a measure of comparison with last year and to validate the open ended data. The teachers were brought together and given the open ended questionnaire first. After the first instrument was completed and collected, they were given the forced choice rating scale. (Questionnaires are in Appendix 2)

1. Open ended Questions

In the open ended questionnaire, teachers were first asked to list in order what they considered to be the four advantages of the program. 100% of the teachers (N=12) saw at least two advantages of the project. Eight of the teachers listed three advantages to the program and three listed four advantages. Ten teachers felt that the additional funding was the most important advantage. Two indicated that the parent assistant program was the primary advantage, while all other ten teachers saw the parents program as the second most advantageous aspect of the project. 100% of the teachers felt that parents in the classroom were a major (i.e., either first or second) advantage of the project. Some of the other advantages listed were additional personnel (2 teachers); psychological services (3 teachers); close working relationships among teachers (2 teachers); materials (1 teacher); and organization of the program (1 teacher).

The teachers were next asked to list four disadvantages of the program. Four teachers saw no disadvantages. Eight teachers saw one disadvantage, five saw two disadvantages, and one listed three disadvantages. There was very little consensus as to what any of the disadvantages were. For example, as a first disadvantage, four teachers gave the large number of meetings, two felt there were too many activities going on at once, one wanted more funds, and one felt the need

for more pupil personnel meetings. There was even less consensus as to a second disadvantage with two teachers listing the large number of visitors who tour the school, one listing the cafeteria program, one citing too many committees, and one wanting more parents. Only one teacher saw a third disadvantage and that was the need for smaller class size. However, since class size is not within the province of the program, the response was not applicable.

Teachers were finally asked what things they would like to see changed in the program. Only three teachers responded to the question, and each suggested three changes. The suggested changes included improving the cafeteria program, involving more parents, recruiting fathers, and more active leadership by the principal.

In all, teachers indicated strong support of both the parents' program, and the direct access to additional funds for materials, consultants, and student travel. While there was little consensus on program criticism, much of it reflected a desire to increase those aspects already seen as advantageous.

2. Rating Scale

The rating scale which was administered after the open ended questionnaires were collected, largely confirmed the open ended questions and indicated general satisfaction with the project. Four or five point rating scales were used with the highest number signifying essential, very "successful - important - helpful," and the lowest number representing could be eliminated, not "successful - important - helpful" at all. The first question was designed to measure the extent to which teachers felt they had input into program operations. Teachers indicated a view that some things were not

within teacher control, but that teacher input was important in deciding how many aspects of the program were run. All services of the program received very high positive ratings. All teachers thought the parents program was essential and that funds for classroom supplies were very important. Eight teachers saw staff honorariums as very important, but the remaining four saw honorariums as a less important aspect of the program. The curriculum workshops and written communications were viewed as important, but of less value than the parents program and support funds. The ratings corroborated the open ended questionnaire (i.e., highest value on parents program and funds for classroom supplies). While all ratings were high, staff honorariums (money paid directly to teachers) received the lowest rating, an indicator of teacher investment in the project for its own sake. Interestingly, communications such as minutes of meetings were not listed at all in the open ended questionnaire, although it was rated as important on the rating scale.

Teachers were next asked to rate the parents program in terms of its impact on both social and academic development of students. Parents were viewed as helpful with both aspects. Parents in the classroom generally worked out very well. Nine teachers felt that the classroom parent program worked out about as well as last year, whereas 3 teachers felt it was better than last year. The parent program received very high ratings last year also, so there was actually little room for improvement on this dimension. When specifically asked how they would change the parents program, 7 out of 12 of the teachers wanted to increase it to five full days a week, and two wanted to give the parents more money. All teachers wanted to have a classroom parent again next year.

Teachers next rated the cafeteria program which was seen as the program's major weakness last year. Ten out of 12 teachers felt that the

cafeteria program was somewhat better, but still needed improvement. Eleven teachers suggested changes for the cafeteria including having the principal in the cafeteria for the entire session, eliminating yelling at children, having a full thirty minute lunch period, providing substitutes for absent parents, and using disciplinary measures other than taking away recess. These are essentially many of the same changes suggested last year.

The next item concerned suggestions for budget changes. Only three teachers responded to the question, each suggesting one change as follows: omit some workshops, allow teachers more input into the selection of consultants, and add more parents.

The next section asked about the effect of the program on academic achievement as measured by standardized tests. Nine teachers felt that the program had some effect on academic achievement and three felt it had a large impact on academic achievement. This was a slight increase in how the program was viewed in relation to academic achievement last year. Teachers rated the importance of various aspects of the program in terms of academic achievement as follows:

Table 1

Category	N of Teachers	High Impact on Academic Achievement		Low Impact on Academic Achievement		Average Degree of Impact on Academic Achievement
		4	3	2	1	
Classroom Parent Program	12	11			1	3.75
Classroom supplies /travel money	12	9	2		1	3.58
Math workshops and consultations	11	7	2		2	3.27
Special materials by reading and math specialists to prepare children for tests	12	6	2	2	2	3.00

Once again, the parents' program and supplies-travel funds received the highest ratings.

Finally, teachers were asked to assess the professional staff from Child Study Center responsible for the administration of the program at the school. Teachers indicated that there had been sufficient administrative direction. Eight teachers felt that their requests were usually dealt with fairly and promptly, while four felt that this was sometimes the case. This rating, although high, is less than the highest possible rating given by all of the teachers in 1976. This change may have been due to greater familiarity with the program, an increase in the overall number of requests for funds and services, and the subsequent need to evaluate requests more carefully thereby choosing some projects over others.

In all, teachers repeatedly stressed the importance of the parents' program, and direct access to additional funds. Other aspects of the program such as outside curriculum consultants and workshops were seen as less important. Teachers continue to see problems with the cafeteria program which is corroborated by parents, general observation, and minutes of school governance meetings. Last year, teachers tended to give everything a high rating. As they gain more experience with the program, they are more critical in their judgments, and in the selection of those aspects of the program that best facilitate their work.

B. Social Skills Teaching Units

In order to facilitate teaching that integrates social and academic skills, the program had funds allocated for materials, student travel, and consultants for which individual teachers or groups of teachers could submit written proposals. Each proposal included the teacher's objectives, the plans for achieving them, and cost to the School Advisory Committee which determined the level of funding.

The teacher projects fell into three broad categories. The first category included projects with specific goals, a clear beginning and end, special periods of teaching time set aside for the activities, and in most cases collaboration and work among teachers and/or outside consultants. It was possible to evaluate these projects clearly, and all of them were considered successful. The second type of proposal was for ancillary materials that could be assumed to generally enrich classroom life such as games, manipulative materials, and cassette tapes, but around which no specific program was designed. The achievement of the goals of these proposals tended to be global and difficult to measure. The third category includes proposals that were funded but not carried through as planned. The projects are listed with level of funding by category in Table . A total of \$2,953 was spent in response to teacher proposals. Of this amount, \$1,889 or approximately 64% was spent on category I proposals, \$725 or about 25% was spent on category II proposals, and \$339 or about 11% was spent on category III proposals. An additional \$1,142 was spent to supplement general school system supplies and staff-parent-student social events for the school. This money, while not part of a teacher proposal, served to furnish both basic needs (such as paper and pencils) so that teacher energy could be freed for innovative curriculum projects, and

to supplement funding to the Parent Teacher Power Team for social activities such as banquets and a parade float that serve to enhance the overall climate of the school.

Category I

The majority of the social skills projects fell into this category and most teachers (10 out of 12) were involved in at least one project at this level. Units included were: Elections (9 teachers); Whole Person (5 teachers); Banking (3 teachers); and Kindergarten Language (1 teacher).

Elections: All classes, starting with first grade, participated in planned activities around the 1976 Presidential Election. This was a follow-up unit to the 1975 New Haven Mayoral Election Unit. The goal of the unit was to enable children, parents, and staff to view themselves as able to have an impact on the political process, utilizing a significant event in the natural environment. The activities were planned by the teaching staff during an inservice meeting, and in other subcommittee and grade level meetings. Activities included trips to government institutions, use of media and newspapers, class discussion, a mini-political convention, writing speeches, letters, reports and campaign posters, and participating in elections. In June, a voter registration session was held for parents and staff at the school. The unit was evaluated by staff and parent questionnaires, and by student interviews.

Eight of the nine participating teachers completed written questionnaires at the end of the unit. The ratings were scored on a four point scale where 4=very successful, helpful or important and 1=not successful, helpful or important at all. Five teachers thought the unit was very successful and the other three rated it successful. Each activity was rated for importance as follows:

	No. of Classes	4 Very Important	3 Somewhat Important	Average Rating
Class Discussions	8	8		4.00
Mock Elections	8	8		4.00
Writing Speeches	5	5		4.00
Mini-Convention	3	3		4.00
Class Elections	3	3		4.00
Media and Newspapers	8	6	2	3.75
Seeing Voting Machines	7	5	2	3.71
Trips (City Hall, Tour of City)	8	5	3	3.64
Letters, Reports, Posters	3	1	2	3.33

All teachers thought that their classes learned to identify Ford and Carter. Two teachers thought their classes learned a great deal about the role of the president, four thought their class learned a moderate amount, and two thought they learned a little about what the president does. All teachers thought their classes learned that voting is a way that people make a choice.

In comparing the relative impact of the Presidential and Mayoral units on students, five teachers felt that both units were equally important while three teachers felt the mayoral unit had a bigger impact. The mayoral unit involved issues which more directly involved the day to day life of the community, and included visits to the school by all three of the mayoral candidates. The presidential unit, on the other hand, was to a greater degree dependent on use of media. Both elections however were, in reality, felt to be largely influenced by the black vote, and this may have been the reason why many teachers felt they were of equal importance. Teachers felt that they had a large share in planning the unit. Teachers also felt that their classes were interested in the election. Five teachers thought their classes learned about as much as they expected, while three teachers thought their classes learned more than anticipated. Last year, 80% of the teachers felt that their classes had learned more than anticipated, indicating a significant rise in teacher expectations this year. All teachers, both before and after the unit, viewed it as very important. Teachers also felt that the unit had some impact on getting parents to vote. Teachers felt that programs such as this would have some influence in increasing the likelihood of children voting as adults and that it helped children to see political figures as somewhat more accessible people. Six teachers felt that the unit had an ongoing impact on their classes, including a greater interest in

Carter, Ford, and the Mayor of New Haven, a greater interest in news events, and utilizing voting as a way of making decisions. All eight teachers felt that an Election Unit should be an annual part of the school calendar.

A parent questionnaire was sent home with all students in January. Parents were instructed to complete the questionnaire only once and to return it with their oldest child. Because of initial poor returns, a second set of questionnaires was sent home two weeks later. Teachers were encouraged to reward their classes for a high return. Out of a total of 147 families, 142 or 95% of the questionnaires were finally returned. Ninety-two per cent of the parents knew about the election unit from their child and/or teacher. 92% of the parents felt it was very important to teach children about politics, while 7% thought it was somewhat important, and only 1% thought it was not important at all. In terms of political behavior, 64% of the parents said that they were registered to vote, 47% said they voted in the 1975 mayoral election and 61% said they voted in the 1976 Presidential election. While we attempted to ascertain the percentage of adults in the school district who were active voters, we were unable to obtain meaningful data due to changes in ward boundaries and census tracts. A special voter registration session held at the school in June brought 14 new registrants among parents working in the school and school staff. While this was considered to be a poor turn-out for a special session, it served to register all unregistered parents and staff working at the school.

The impact of the unit on students was assessed by interviews with a stratified random sample of five children from each of the 9 participating classes (N=45) three months after the unit was completed. Each child was asked to identify Ford and Carter from newspaper clippings, explain what

voting was, and to describe the role of the president. All children interviewed could identify Ford and Carter's pictures. 40 children (89%) saw the role of the president as heading, running, helping, and/or working for the entire country. Only 4 children (9%) mistakenly thought the president ran the city and one child (2%) thought he ran the state. All children correctly understood voting as the way that people make a choice and/or elect their leaders.

Unfortunately, the results could not be compared with a control school. Since most children's magazines carried stories about the election, it is reasonable to assume that many elementary schools covered the material. Neither do we know how many inner city schools gave attention to the election and with what focus, although prior to this program, political affairs had never been given any systematic attention at King School. The unit can only be assessed in terms of achieving its own goals. Staff awareness about children's interest in and ability to understand political life increased over the two year period, and staff now values including election activities as part of the annual calendar. It would appear that parents have increased political awareness, although it is not known whether their actual voting behavior has changed. Parents in any event, view knowledge of politics as very important for their children. Children understood, after a three month lapse, the primary concepts taught in the elections unit, and demonstrated an increased awareness of and interest in political life.

The Whole Person: Three first and two second grade teachers*

developed the whole person curriculum with a pediatrician who was a post-graduate fellow in child development at the Child Study Center. The purpose of the unit was to address concerns raised by the children about their own bodies and feelings, using the natural interests and worries of the child (i.e., bowel and bladder function, losing teeth) as a learning base. The teachers met with the pediatrician once a week to plan the program. The pediatrician made initial presentations to each class once a week, introducing body parts and functions, answering student questions, and presenting actual organs and medical equipment. The teachers each did follow-up lessons during the course of the week, focusing on building a vocabulary of correct body parts or functions (i.e., esophagus, stomach, intestines, bowel, urine etc.), and helping each child to build a life size model, sketched from his or her body outline, with correctly placed internal organs. Areas covered include the digestive system, circulatory system, respiratory system, reproductive system, and the brain. Initial planning took place during December, 1976, and the program continued from January to June. There were ancillary projects in some classrooms around nutrition and good manners including eating in restaurants, sampling health foods, and cooking. The project was evaluated by teacher rating, parent questionnaires, analysis of process notes of each session and meeting, student interviews, drawings of internal organs, and pre and post Draw-A-Person.

*A sixth teacher (gr. 2-3) joined the group during the year, and conducted much of the unit in her classroom. However, since the class was not included in the initial proposal, evaluation data were not collected.

All of the teachers verbally rated the unit as very successful in June. All of the teachers would like to either continue the project next year (those teachers that will have their class a second year) or repeat it with their new class. Three additional teachers have asked to be included in the project next year. In June, a written questionnaire was sent home with all of the children in the program (N=118). A total of 116 questionnaires (98%) were returned. All parents knew about the unit, rated it very important ($\bar{x}$ 4.00 on a 4 point scale where 4=very important and 1=not important at all), and had talked with their child about what had been taught. 92% of the parents felt they had learned something about the human body from their child. When asked to comment about what they had learned, parents mentioned the following: heart, blood, circulatory system - 70%; eating and digestion - 35%; nutrition - 17%; and the respiratory system - 16%. Interestingly, parents did not comment on either elimination or reproduction (parents were informed about these topics by a letter sent home with February report cards) which were the two areas about which the children asked the most questions.

Sixty children (about half) were interviewed in June to assess the extent to which they had integrated the material presented. Since the unit was being developed as it was presented, no pre-test was conducted and since the project included all of the first and second graders in the school, neither a pre-post nor a control group comparison could be made. However, the teachers judged that the children did not know this material before the unit and probably would not have learned it at this age level without the program. Their assessment can be assumed to be reliable based on the fact that each of them had been teaching at the primary grade level

for at least five years, and all five teachers held the same judgment. Twelve children were selected from each class, based on a random selection of three children from each of four ability based reading groups. There was an equal distribution of boys and girls. The children were interviewed individually, outside of their classrooms within two weeks of the close of the course. They were asked the following:

1) To point to the heart, lungs, esophagus, stomach, and intestines on a body model; 2) To answer the question "What happens to food after you put it in your mouth?" The response had to include these steps, in order, to be considered correct: chewed or masticated, swallowed or pushed down by the tongue to the esophagus, digested in the stomach, passed to small and then large intestine, absorbed by the blood vessels, waste passed out; 3) To answer the question, "What is it called if your bowels are soft and running and why might that happen?" The response had to include "diarrhea," that the food was not fully digested, and that there was excess water in the intestines, to be considered correct; 4) To answer the question, "Why do you choke?" The response had to include a block obstruction and/or something stuck in the "windpipe" to be considered correct. In four of the five classes (three first grade classes and one second grade N=48) all children interviewed answered every single item correctly. In the fifth class, there was a 91% level of accuracy.

Teachers were additionally asked to have each child in their class draw a picture of the internal body organs from memory after the models and all other related materials had been removed from the room. The direction was to draw a picture of the inside of your body, but children were not directed to draw any specific organs. Drawings were

received from four of the five classes (three first grade classes and one second grade N=93). Every drawing received included at least the following organs: heart, lungs, stomach, esophagus, intestines and bones. Blood vessels were included in all of the second grade drawings and in all but five (68 out of 73) of the first grade drawings. The Draw-A-Person test was administered to all children in the project in January and June. There was no significant difference in the pre and post measures. One would not expect a change in Draw-A-Person in a four month period of time. However, it was included on the possibility that studying the human body would increase the number of details included in a figure drawing.

There were several indications that the unit was extremely successful. The enthusiasm of all five teachers led to plans for other teachers to include the unit next year.

While the four ancillary projects on nutrition were not formally evaluated, observation of teacher, parent, and student enthusiasm, enjoyment, and willingness to try unknown foods and places, judged all of these projects to be successful. The focus and activities of each project varied. Two of the first grade classes had cooking projects, the purpose of which was to analyze the properties of various ingredients and their functions in the body. One of the second grade teachers bought and prepared a wide variety of health foods for her class with the goal of teaching children about different and nutritious snacks. The other second grade teacher took the class, in small groups of five students each, to eat in a formal restaurant, focusing on manners and appropriate social behavior. Again, the enthusiasm about these projects has spread to other teachers, so that an increase in this kind of proposal is expected next year.

Banking: The banking unit was developed by the three first grade teachers and conducted in two classes from September to June and in the third from February to June. The purpose of the unit was to introduce children to the working economy (i.e., work, payment for work, banking transactions, purchase). The project involved the organization of a class bank and store. Children earned five cents a day for assigned tasks related to the care and maintenance of the classroom (i.e., line leader, picking up papers, responsibility for the maintenance of an activity area). The tasks had no relation to either the academic work of the classroom or with behavior other than those actions connected with the assigned task. Payment was neither given nor withheld as a reward or punishment, although no payment was made for days absent, regardless of the reason. Each child received a check every Friday which was cashed at the class bank and either wholly or in part saved, or spent at the class store. The class store had a variety of items such as pencils, magic markers, writing pads, puzzles, small toys and games ranging in price from 5¢ to \$2.00. The complete economy was a closed system - i.e., money could neither be brought in from home nor taken out of the classroom. In the spring, two of the classrooms were vandalized and all of the contents of their banks and stores stolen. The idea of "insurance" was introduced at this time. Other concepts introduced were differential interest rates for saving and borrowing, differentiating between wants and needs, and discounting, layaway, and credit as options of purchase.

The unit was evaluated by analysis of process notes, student and parent questionnaires, and teacher rating. All three teachers rated the unit as very successful, and plan to continue it next year. Their enthusiasm for

this approach has led to additional teachers requesting banking programs next year also. A parent questionnaire was sent home with all children in the program in May (N=69). 94% of the parents returned the questionnaire, and all of them knew about the unit and gave it the highest possible rating for importance. 60% of the parents said they had noticed that their child now handled money differently at home, and on an open ended question, 30 parents specifically commented on how the child's handling of money had improved as follows: 12 parents said their child could better differentiate between wants and needs, 8 parents opened new savings accounts for their children, 6 parents said their child could count money better, and 4 parents said their child now saves his money to buy things.

Thirty-six students (about half) were interviewed in June to assess the extent to which they had integrated the material presented. Since the unit was being developed as it was presented, no pre-test was conducted, and since the project included all of the first graders in the school, neither a pre-post nor a control group comparison can be made. However, the teachers judged that the children did not know this material before the unit began, and probably would not have learned it at this age level without the program. Their assessment can be assumed to be reliable based on the fact that each of them had been teaching at the primary grade level for at least five years, and all three teachers held the same judgment. Twelve children were selected from each class, based on a random selection of three children from each of four ability based reading groups. There was an equal distribution of boys and girls. The children were interviewed individually, outside of their classrooms, and

were asked the following: 1) To count 7 nickels and tell the total amount of money they represented; 2) To read a check for twenty-five cents; 3) To define the terms interest, deposit, withdrawal, and insurance. All students (N=36) correctly counted money, read the check, and defined deposit and withdrawal. In the two classes that were burglarized, all students correctly defined insurance. Even in the classroom that had not been robbed, as a result of teacher discussion about the theft and insurance system, 83% of the students correctly defined insurance. In one classroom, the teacher gave a high rate of interest for saving, whereas in the other two classrooms, there was less focus on the concept of interest. In the first classroom, all children interviewed correctly defined interest, whereas in the other two classrooms 66% of the children understood the term.

The unit was judged very successful by all measures utilized, including teacher and parent ratings, and student interviews which showed a 97% level of accuracy for the concepts presented.

Gospel Choir: The gospel choir was organized and led by a classroom teacher with the help of another classroom teacher, a Child Study Center assistant, a parent assistant and a gospel pianist, for all interested third and fourth graders. The choir gave 12 performances at various functions at King School, another elementary school, a church, and a New Haven administrators' meeting which was televised locally. The choir was evaluated by the teachers, student members and their parents.

The four adult leaders rated the choir as very successful. A parent questionnaire was sent home with all choir members (N=34) in June, and there was a 100% return. All parents reported that they had attended gospel choir performances as follows: 65% attended all 12 performances, 21% saw between 9 and 11 performances, and 9% came to between 2 and 7 performances. All parents would like to have their children join the choir again next year. Enrollment in the choir increased from 25 to 34 members (with a waiting list), and rehearsal attendance was very high (26 after school rehearsals were held between February and June with an average attendance of 95%). All 34 choir members were interviewed individually in June, and all reported enjoying the choir and wanting to join again next year. When asked who decided what songs the choir would sing, 88% of the choir members felt that the students had selected the songs themselves, while the remaining 12% felt that students and teachers selected the songs together. While the latter group more correctly perceived how the songs were selected, the fact that the majority of children felt they had determined how the choir was run themselves indicates the strong sense of investment and pride in the group.

Kindergarten Language Program: The kindergarten teacher organized a language development program for children identified as high risk for school failure on the Beers Screening Inventory administered to all New Haven kindergarten children each September. The teacher was particularly concerned about these children's poor fund of vocabulary for basic household and school objects, their incomplete sentence structure and limited verbal interaction with one another during play activities. The teacher purchased a play family safari, farm, village, Sesame Street House, and various construction toys, and developed a list of 252 names of objects included among the items such as washing machine, dentist chair, cement mixer, gorilla, and so forth. The toys were utilized both in the language program and as part of free play activity from February to May. While the materials were utilized by all of the kindergarten children, the language program was specifically conducted with the nine children at high risk. These nine children were evaluated pre and post by being asked to identify 55 of the 252 items, the names of which were randomly drawn from a bowl. On the pre-test (February 25), the nine children achieved a $\bar{x}$ of 24 correct responses, and on the post-test (May 30-31), the same children achieved a $\bar{x}$ of 54 correct responses. The differences were highly significant at the .001 level. While there was no control group, and the children may have learned the material elsewhere on their own, the specific nature of some of the items (i.e., milkman, telephone booth, grille), as well as the relatively short time (three months) between pre and post tests would indicate that the change was due to the intervention. For example, one of the children, on an individual psychological evaluation, failed to correctly identify any animals other than those used in the program.

The teacher, when asked to evaluate the unit, rated it as somewhat successful. Her criticism was not directed towards the specific goals of this unit, but rather towards the need to provide a far more comprehensive program for children at high risk. The original plan was to develop such a program during the next school year. However, this teacher will be on leave for the first semester, so the comprehensive kindergarten enrichment program will be planned during the spring for implementation during the 1978-79 school year.

Category 2: Included in this category are proposals for classroom supplies and equipment to supplement interest areas and independent activities. Grants for enrichment materials including games, small audio-visual equipment and crafts supplies were given to seven classrooms. What differentiated these proposals from those in Category 1, was that the materials were not part of a specific program, but are items generally thought to enhance classroom life.

The goals of these proposals tended to be very global, including such ideas as improving cooperation, and raising self-image, and were therefore extremely difficult to measure. In classrooms where materials were purchased to supplement interest centers, children were asked pre and post which areas they liked best. The children consistently preferred the areas that were well organized by the teacher, although they did not necessarily favor the new equipment. All of the materials purchased, however, were utilized in the manner intended in the teacher's proposal.

It should be noted here that the school has a poor security system leading to relatively frequent vandalism and theft. This creates a particular dilemma about adding new supplies and equipment to the school. On the one hand, it does not appear prudent to purchase materials for an uninsured school with frequent thefts. On the other hand, stolen materials must be replaced quickly to restore teacher and student morale. In order to maintain a favorable school climate, materials were purchased even though the likelihood for theft was high, and insofar as possible, program resources were used to replace stolen materials.

Category 3: The projects in this category were not completed as anticipated. Of the fifteen proposals received, many involving several classrooms, only two were not completed. The first of these was a proposal to bring a variety of black performing groups to the school as part of a total fine arts program. While one performance by a young dance troupe was highly successful (as rated by teachers and a random selection of five children from each classroom) no other performances were scheduled. The other incomplete proposal was for a math interest center in a second grade classroom. While the proposal was well prepared and planned by the teacher with the program's math consultant, the teacher did not organize the math center after the materials arrived. The teacher did later use some of the materials, although not in the way intended in the proposal, for independent student activities.

Table II
Social Skills Teaching Unit Expenditures

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type of Expenditures</u>	<u>Total Expenditure</u>
Category 1		
Elections	Student Newspapers	\$234
9 classes	Trips - Bus Rental	<u>\$ 65</u>
Gr. 1-4		Total <u>\$299</u>
Whole Person	Materials for body	
5 classes	models and reference	
Gr. 1-2	books on human body	\$290
	Nutrition subunit-	
	3 classes	\$ 75
	Restaurant subunit-	
	1 class	\$ 45
	Postgraduate Fellow in	
	Child Development	
		Courtesy Yale Child Study Center
		Total <u>\$410</u>
Banking	5¢ per day per child-	
3 classes	converted to materials	
Gr. 1	for classroom store	\$600
	Replacement of stolen	
	materials	<u>\$ 75</u>
		Total <u>\$675</u>
Gospel Choir	Pianist Fees	<u>\$235</u>
Gr. 3-4		Total <u>\$235</u>
open enrollment		
Kindergarten	Play Family Safari, Farm,	
Language	Sesame Street and Village,	
2 half day classes	Construction toys	<u>\$130</u>
		Total <u>\$130</u>
Solar System	Bus to Hayden	
2 classes	Planetarium	<u>\$140</u>
Gr. 3-4		Total <u>\$140</u>

Total Category I \$1,889

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type of Expenditures</u>	<u>Total Expenditure</u>
<u>Category 2</u>		
Materials for Independent Activities and/or Interest Corners 7 classes RR-Gr. 4	Materials including games, language enrichment, math manipulatives, tape cassettes	Approximately \$100 each class <u>\$725</u> Total <u>\$725</u>
Total Category 2		\$725

<u>Category 3</u>		
Fine Arts [*] All students	Dance Performance Honorarium	<u>\$100</u> Total <u>\$100</u>
Math Skills 1 class Gr. 2	Math reference books and manipulatives Math Consultant (3 hours)	\$179 <u>\$ 60</u> Total <u>\$239</u>

* \$250 was originally budgeted.
\$150 moved to Category 2.

Total Category 3 \$339

Total Social Skills Teaching Units \$2,953

Miscellaneous

Printer Photo Pages School Newsletter (King's Voice - 5 issues)	\$ 127
Supplement to General School Supplies (8 1/2 X 11 paper, ditto fluid, pencils, etc.)	\$ 485
Supplement to General School Wide Projects such as Graduation Caps, Food for Social Functions, Float for Parade. These expenses shared by Parent-Teacher Power Team treasury.	<u>\$ 530</u>
Total Miscellaneous	<u>\$1,142</u>

III. Impact on Students - Metropolitan Achievement Test Scores for Reading and Math

The impact of the social skills model on students is assessed in terms of attendance, improved social behavior (see I. School Climate) and by student response to the social skills teaching units (see II. Impact on Staff, B. Social Skills Teaching Units). However, a question of major importance in many inner city school intervention projects is the effect of the program on basic academic skill achievement as measured by standardized tests. While the problems inherent in most forms of standardized tests are recognized, they remain an important aspect of the American educational scene.

The Metropolitan Achievement Tests for Reading and Math, which are routinely administered in all New Haven elementary schools each spring, were analyzed to compare King students with students from New Haven's nineteen Title I elementary schools, and King students who have attended the school for two or more years with students who have been in the program less than two years. Data were provided by the test division of Harcourt Brace and Janovich, as prepared for the New Haven Public Schools. At King School, an observer who had been given instruction in standardized test procedure was assigned to each classroom for all testing sessions.

Table III compares King School achievement in reading and math with all other New Haven Title I Schools for grades two, three, and four. All comparisons demonstrated significantly higher scores for King students than for all other New Haven Title I Schools. Levels of statistical significance

were all well beyond the conventional .05 level.*

An additional analysis compared achievement for students who have attended King School for two or more years and those students who have been at King for less than two years. The analyses reveal that those children who have been at King School two years or more have significantly higher scores in both reading and mathematics when compared to those children who have been at King School less than two years. (Reading, $P < .001$, Mathematics, $P < .006$). The students with the longer stay at King were on the average 8 months higher in reading and five months higher in math than children who had been at King less than two years. Unfortunately, data from other Title I schools relating length of attendance to achievement test scores is not available. It might be argued therefore that children who attend a school two or more years are members of more stable families than those children who attend a given school for briefer periods. However, it is possible that remaining a student in the social skills curriculum over an extended period of time results in improved academic achievement. Even when all children in the school are included, the achievement of King students is significantly higher than the achievement of children in other Title I schools.

As in 1976, fourth grade King Metropolitan Achievement Test scores were compared with fourth grade scores from New Haven Title I schools. This year the King scores were divided into three groups: students enrolled at King for 5 years (high stay group), students enrolled at King

*The levels of statistical significance range between .025 to less than .001. These levels of significance were high enough to control for the possible effects of chance significance caused by the making of multiple paired comparisons.

for at least 2 years but less than 5 (intermediate stay group), and students enrolled at King for less than 2 years (low stay group). Statistical analyses were performed on the 1977 data comparing scores among the three King groups. In both Reading and Math the intermediate stay group scored significantly higher ($P < .05$) than the low stay group, while scores of high stay students differed even more significantly ($P < .01$) than the low stay group. No significant difference was found between the high and intermediate groups. Due to the unavailability of individual school means, it was impossible to include the Title I schools in these analyses. However, as can be seen, all three King groups combined scored appreciably higher than the Title I schools. See Table IV.

Table III

Metropolitan Achievement Test Scores

Comparison between King School and all New Haven Title I Schools; raw and grade scores.

Reading Metropolitan Achievement Test:

	<u>King School</u>	<u>All New Haven Title I Schools</u>
Grade 2 (raw)	70.3	66.7
(grade)	2.5	2.3
Grade 3	73.2	66.3
	3.3	2.9
Grade 4	65.5	53.8
	4.0	3.5

Math Metropolitan Achievement Test:

	<u>King School</u>	<u>All New Haven Title I Schools</u>
Grade 2 (raw)	54.0	51.5
(grade)	2.7	2.5
Grade 3	85.9	80.4
	3.6	3.2
Grade 4	76.8	71.8
	4.4	4.1

Table IV

Metropolitan Achievement Test Scores
King School
Grade 4 - 1976 and 1977

1976

	<u>High Stay Group</u>	<u>Intermediate Stay Group</u>	<u>New Haven Title I Schools</u>
	<u>Students enrolled at King School for 5 years</u>	<u>Students enrolled at King School for at least 2 years</u>	
Reading	4.6	4.1	3.5
Math	5.2	4.7	4.1

1977

	<u>High Stay Group</u>	<u>Intermediate Stay Group</u>	<u>Low Stay Group</u>	<u>New Haven Title I Schools</u>
	<u>Students enrolled at King School for 5 years</u>	<u>Students enrolled at King School for at least 2 years</u>	<u>Students enrolled at King School for less than 2 years</u>	
Reading	4.5	4.5	3.9	3.5
Math	4.9	4.8	4.2	4.1

The expected score based on national norms including all social status schools is 4.9.

IV. Impact on Parents

Parent participation is evaluated at each of three levels of involvement. Level I is broad based participation including home-school communications, parent support for the school program, and attendance at general school meetings and events. It is expected that in a well organized parents program, all or most of the parent body would participate at this level. Level II describes the activities of parents in the day to day life of the school. This level includes the approximately 20 parents who are at any one time part of the project's parent assistant program. Level III includes parent-staff collaboration in school governance.

Level I: Broad-based participation

1. Home-School Communications - Tallies were kept of home-school communications and parent attendance at school events.

Four forms of home-school communications were tallied as follows: personal teacher-parent contact, written communications, report card conferences, and parent response to the social skills teaching units. Teachers (N=12) were asked at two intervals (1/31 - 2/4; and 3/14 - 3/18) about their communications with parents during the preceding week. The teachers were asked how many parents they called, how many parents called them, how many parents dropped in, how many home visits they made, and how many parents they saw for the first time. Since the data was only collected twice, and since there was no control school, the findings can only be used to describe particular time periods at King. This data should prove more useful next year when it is collected regularly and compared with the field test school. There was an average total of 107 teacher-parent contacts

each of the two weeks for which tallies were taken, as follows: teachers called a total average of 18 parents, 16 parents called teachers, 66 parents dropped into the classroom, there was one home visit, and six parents were seen for the first time (this includes new parents to the school). If these findings are representative, which is not known at this time, teachers have direct verbal contact, more than half of which is in person, with the parents of a third of the children in their classrooms in any given week.

Written communications by teachers were also tallied for the months of March and May. These are communications which teachers prepare in addition to the five issues of the schoolwide newsletter and minimum of two flyers sent home before every schoolwide event. Teachers (N=12) sent home a total average of 20 flyers, 2 newsletters and 23 individual notes per month. These measures are limited by the same constraints as the person to person communication described above. There was an increase in both personal and written communications between the two periods when data was collected.

Parent conferences were held to supplement the February report cards by all (N=12) of the teachers in the school. (Total school enrollment = 305 students) 89% of the parents were seen for inperson conferences, and telephone conferences were held with another 7%, for a total of 96% parent participation in report card conferences (parents of 290 children). Again, while no comparable data was collected at other schools (many of which also have report card conferences), teachers, principals and school board members outside of King School informally thought this to be a very high turn-out.

Parents were tallied, by questionnaires sent home with their children, about four of the social skills teaching units (i.e., Elections, Whole Person, Banking, Gospel Choir. Refer to Part II Impact on Teachers, Section B, Social Skills Teaching Units). Return on all questionnaires was very high (88%-100%), and indicated strong support of the program.

2. Parent Meetings - Two kinds of parent meetings were held at the school. The first was a series of "Coffee Hours," or workshops relevant to the school program and/or community, held once a month during school time. There was an average attendance of 27 parents at each Coffee Hour, most of whom were parents working in the parent assistant program. Coffee Hours have been held for several years at King, and "good" attendance has by tradition been considered to be 15 or more parents. The second type of parent meetings are large evening assemblies, social events such as suppers, fashion shows, fourth grade graduation and so forth. Four such events were held between January and June, all of which had a "full house" turn-out of more than 200 people. The number of families that attended school social functions, their general enthusiasm, and the frequency with which such events were organized point to their general success.

Level II: Parents in Day to Day School Life

All parents working in the school as classroom assistants, tutors, or cafeteria assistants in June (N=18) completed an open ended program evaluation. The parents program was also evaluated by teachers (see Section II Impact on Teachers, Section A, Staff Questionnaire), and by analysis of parent's attendance records.

1. Parent Questionnaire - Parents completed an open-ended "advantages-disadvantages - change" questionnaire similar to the one completed by teachers

under the same conditions (see Section II, Impact on Staff, A. Staff Questionnaires). Parents were first asked to list three advantages of the social skills program. All parents listed at least two advantages, and there was high consensus among them. All parents listed the parents program itself as the first advantage of the social skills project. Thirteen parents cited the importance or impact of working as a group with other parents, teachers, and students as the second advantage. Three parents listed working with children who had reading problems as the second most important advantage. Seven parents cited a third advantage of the program, although there was less consensus on this advantage. Four parents listed working on a one to one basis with children having problems, two listed the Coffee Hours, and only one listed the money received. The monetary aspect of the program was approached indirectly in the section on disadvantages. All parents listed the fact that parents should have more time working in the school as the first disadvantage of the program. Seventeen parents listed the fact that there should be more parents in the program as a second disadvantage, while one parent saw the need for a better relationship with students as a second disadvantage. Only one parent listed a third disadvantage, which was that parents should have more time to work with students with special problems. All parents listed at least one thing they would like to change, and again there was total consensus on the fact that parents would like more hours to work with children. Only four parents listed two things they would like to change. Three parents wanted changes in the cafeteria program so that relationships among students and parents were improved, and one parent wanted more field trips. Only one parent listed a third suggestion for change, and this was a need for more parent involvement in playground supervision.

2. Parent Attendance - Attendance records for parents were reviewed for the months of February and May. Since all attendance records are signed by teachers for payroll purposes, at least two persons agree to their reliability. Parents are paid for an average of 35 hours each per month. However, attendance records show that parents actually worked an average of 56 hours per month, so in fact each parent was volunteering an average of 21 hours a month on her own initiative.

The overwhelmingly high level of parent investment in this program is evidenced both by parent opinion and actual work in the school, and is corroborated by teacher opinion. There is high consensus among parents as to the importance of the program, and its value for community-school relationships. The changes and disadvantages suggested are clearly to increase and expand the program because of its desirability. Parents tended to see the program less critically than teachers. For example, all of the parents, at least some of the time, worked in the cafeteria. While teacher opinion, records of school governance meetings and general observation all show problems in the cafeteria program, only three parents cited the cafeteria as something that should be changed.

Level III: Parents in School Governance

Parent participation in the School Advisory Committee was used as a measure of parent involvement in school governance. (See I School Climate, Section E. School Governance) While a few (from 1 to 6) parents attended at least part of each S.A.C. meeting, and while it is expected that at this sophisticated level of involvement there will be only a few parents participating at any one time, parent input in actual decisionmaking about internal school events was more circumscribed than

might have been expected given the extremely intense involvement at Level II. Part of the problem was the fact that S.A.C. meetings are held after school which tended to be a poor time for parents, and parents did relatively consistently express satisfaction about internal school affairs. While parents felt an important part of the day to day life of the school, they appeared to experience themselves as having less impact on how the decisions affecting school life were made.

Interestingly, parents were more active, and effectively so, on issues related to King School's external relationship with the larger school system. This year, for example, parents were active in interviewing, screening, and following through on the hire of two new teachers, as well as persistently negotiating for a new schoolwide alarm system. The area of parents in decision making needs more intensive analysis, including interviews and/or surveys of parents about their views in regard to policy and decision making.

Summary and Implications

This model is based on the hypothesis that the reorganization of mental health services from a child changing to a school changing focus, a participatory governance mechanism, and the systematic integration of parents in all aspects of school life leads to an improved school climate which in turn frees energy for more innovative curriculum practices. The successful implementation of this model at King School was assessed through staff and parent attitudes; records of attendance, achievement, and student referrals for special services; minutes of meetings; and evaluations of teacher developed curriculum units. It would appear that a school comparable to King could, given the financial supports and basic methodology undertake this model with limited outside help. The methodology will be outlined in a handbook for use in other schools. The findings are important for parent participation, school governance, student achievement and allocation of funds.

1. Parent Participation: The success of the parent participation program at King is based on a wide range of ways for parents to be involved in school life. At the heart of this approach is the integration of a sizeable group of parents into the day to day life of the school. Stipends enable parents to make work at the school a top priority, bringing them in more intimate contact with their childrens' education. The school's manpower is increased in a cost effective way, since parents are not regular school employees. Every measure utilized including teacher rating, parent opinion, and analysis of parents' attendance records showed the parent stipend program to be a key element in implementing this model. When parents are in school everyday, their participation in other levels of

involvement is increased. An atmosphere or climate is generated which enables the school to be increasingly receptive to ALL parents. This is reflected by the large numbers of home-school communications, 96% parent turn-out at report card conferences, 90-100% return on parent questionnaires about the social skills teaching units, full house turn-out at the several social events and special programs held at the school, and regular schedule of parent workshops and meetings. When parents are familiar with day to day school operations, they are able to make a more meaningful contribution to school governance. Parent participation in school governing bodies, often a mandate in specially funded projects, is extremely difficult to implement effectively. Even with the intense focus on parent involvement at King School, parents had less of an impact on internal school governance than expected. Parents were extremely effective, however, in negotiations with the larger school system to resolve school problems.

2. School Governance: A system of shared decisionmaking, or a forum where all adults in the school community come together for regular planning and problem resolution is critical to the working of the program. It was through King's School Advisory Council that a regular calendar of school events was planned and implemented. A more careful evaluation of the school governing body will be undertaken next year. It would appear that while the School Advisory Committee was successful in planning and executing programs such as allocation of social skills funds, building a new playground, constructing a parade float, and planning schoolwide events, it was less successful in solving longstanding school problems such as building maintenance, and cafeteria management. Given the traditional hierarchy of school governance, a participatory governance system is difficult to implement. Such a

system is, however, critical in enabling staff and parents in inner city schools to have an investment in school life.

3. Student Achievement: Student achievement, as measured by standardized tests, was significantly higher at King School where this model was employed, than in all other New Haven Title I Schools. Acquisition of new information as revealed by the measurement in the social skills curriculums units (e.g., human body, elections) was at a 90% or higher level of accuracy. The program did not advocate any particular method of instruction in the basic skills. Rather, it provided supports for teachers to operationalize programs of their own design.

4. Allocation of Funds: The cost of this program in its entirety, including parent stipends, and curriculum supports is \$85 per child per year. Such a program would be an acceptable use of Title I and other special funds already allocated in most urban schools. Since the program provides many additional supports within the regular school setting, outplacement special education referrals are reduced. It would seem plausible that special education funds could also be reallocated for a preventive model such as this one.

The most effective use of funds was direct access of manpower and support funds at the classroom level. Teachers gave highest priority to expenditures for parent stipends and money to carry through programs they had designed themselves. For example, the most effective program consultant was the postdoctoral fellow in pediatrics who helped teachers with the technical expertise necessary for a program on the human body which they had taken the initiative to prepare. The teachers themselves requested a medical expert, as contrasted to a specialist brought as the result of a need seen by the project investigators. The process of bringing teachers

together, facilitating discussion about the needs of their students and programs they would like to see in their classrooms, and then actually providing the supports to conduct these programs was found to be an effective way to impact curriculum and academic achievement. The social skills teaching units, for the most part, demonstrated clear goals, reasonable strategies, and definite ways of evaluating their effectiveness. No funds were expended on commercial kits. Teachers were instead called upon to custom tailor programs for the needs of their particular students. Funds that were allocated the first year for schoolwide curriculum consultants were largely spent in response to direct requests from individual or small clusters of teachers the second year.

The allocation of funds and resources is a critical aspect of this model. While certain aspects of the model could get underway without a reallocation of funds (i.e., a parents organization, a school governance mechanism), it is the access to resources available in response to the needs of a particular school that largely account for its success.

Recommendations

1. Field Test School

A field test of the social skills curriculum model is planned in a school demographically comparable to King from 1977-80. The field test will determine the extent to which another elementary school, given the basic methodology and funding, can implement this model.

2. King School

King School will be maintained as a demonstration base. Particular attention will be given to evaluating a) the system of school governance and b) the specific methods by which children with learning problems are given help in their regular classrooms.

a. School Governance: The attention given to the resolution of chronic school problems will be documented and given ongoing evaluation. The cafeteria program, for example, remains a troublesome aspect of the program. If resources of this project are not, in fact, improving cafeteria management, those funds should be allocated elsewhere.

b. Mainstreaming: Teachers have requested specific help for children with serious learning problems in the regular classroom. A learning disabilities specialist will work with individual or clusters of teachers at their request. While the School Advisory Committee has not yet planned the schoolwide inservice schedule for the 1977-78 year, it is expected that part of the inservice time will be allocated for classroom planning for mainstreaming.

3. Planning will be initiated with the New Haven Public School system to institutionalize this model at King School, the field test school, and other possible sites, starting in 1980.

4. The final draft of the handbook outlining the methodology for the social skills model will be completed.

Publications

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Table of Appendixes

Appendix 1

Classroom Climate Observation
Schedule and Results of Pilot Study

Appendix 2

Staff Questionnaires
Teacher Comments on Staff Questionnaires
Parent Questionnaires re:
Social Skills Curriculum Units